MAN M677.116

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the Delegates deputed from the Truſtees and People of a Number of Chapels in the Methodiſt Connexion, met at London on the 25th of July, 1796, purſuant to the Adjournment of the laſt Meeting held at Mancheſter in 1795.

FIRST DAY's MEETING.

JOHN COLLINSON was appointed Chairman, and
THOMAS DAY, Secretary.

LETTERS were receiv'd from *Briſtol*, *Dublin*, *Mancheſter*, *Nottingham*, *Bolton*, *Middleton*, *Congleton*, and *Darlington*.

Reſolv'd unanimouſly, THAT it appears from the above Letters, that there are Jealouſies ſubſiſting in the Connexion, which require the Attention and Conſideration of this Meeting.

AN ADDRESS to the Conference from the Truſtees of *Broad Mead* and *Guinea Street* Chapels in *Briſtol* was read.

Order'd, That the above ADDRESS be preſented by the Chairman, and recommended by this Meeting to the Conſideration of the Conference.

Adjourn'd till the next Morning, July 26, 1796, *at* 10 *o'Clock.*

TUESDAY MORNING, *July* 26, The ADDRESS to Conference from *Briſtol* was preſented by Mr. *John Collinſon* the Chairman.

A LETTER from *Sunderland*, with an ADDRESS to Conference—and a LETTER to Conference from *Alnwick*, were receiv'd and read.

A PRINTED ADDRESS to the Methodiſt Societies, from the Truſtees, Stewards, Local Preachers, and others in and about *Newcaſtle*, &c. was read—as were alſo the ADDRESS from *Sheffield* and *Darlington*, brought by the reſpective Delegates.

An ADDRESS to Conference from this Meeting was order'd to be drawn up, and preſented—and a Committee appointed to prepare the ſame.

WEDNESDAY, *July* 27, Mr. *Collinſon* being abſent, *Richard Sauſe* was appointed Chairman *pro tempore*.

All the ADDRESSES to Conference, receiv'd Yeſterday, order'd to be incloſed in one Cover, and preſented to Conference.

The following ADDRESS prepared by the Committee appointed Yeſterday was now brought in, read over twice, conſidered Clauſe by Clauſe, and order'd unanimouſly to be preſented to the Conference:

To the Preachers aſſembled in Conference.

Honoured Fathers and Brethren,

THE Delegates from the Truſtees, &c. having met in *London* agreeable to their Adjournment at *Mancheſter*, JULY 1795, entreat the Attention of the Conference to ſome Subjects contained in their former Addreſs—They rejoice at the Proſperity of Religion in ſeveral Societies; but regret that numerous Circumſtances in them wear an unpromiſing Aſpect. Believing that the ſpread of the Goſpel is cloſely connected with the Union of the acting Members in every religious Society, it is with real Concern we ſee Jealouſies ſubſiſting in various Circuits which threaten to be very injurious.

As the Subjects which occaſion theſe Miſunderſtandings have been conſiderably agitated during this preſent Year—as they are now repreſented in ſeveral Addreſſes to Conference, the oppoſing Sentiments of which (if they differ) we do not enter upon, as they were implied in ſome Parts of our Addreſs delivered laſt Year—it is ſcarcely neceſſary that we ſhould do more than ſubjoin the Outlines of what appears likely to remove the Uneaſineſs in the Connexion. If any Thing we ſuggeſt appears injurious to the Intereſts of Religion, we requeſt a Meeting with the Committee of the Preachers at a Time moſt convenient to them.

We ſhould not have ſolicited the Application of one Moment of Time (ſo important as the Hours of Conference are) had not *our Judgments led us to conclude the Subject is of the utmoſt Importance.* Every Diſpute ſince Mr. *Weſley*'s Death—the very numerous Meeting of Delegates laſt Year—the manifeſt Sentiments of Truſtees, Stewards, Leaders, Local Preachers—the Publications of many of the Preachers—the Addreſſes now before us—oblige us with Regret to believe, "That Jealouſies, deſtructive to the Work, are ſpreading through the Connexion," whilſt every Thing that we have known on a calm and unbiaſſed View of the Parties concerned, and the Circumſtances exiſting—compels us to conclude, "That one principal Cauſe of theſe Jealouſies is owing to a want of fuller Communication between the Circuits and Conference; and to a want of Rules in ſome Parts of our Diſcipline, which might guard the whole Connexion from the improper Influence of Individuals.

Having remarked, in a RESOLUTION contained in our ADDRESS of laſt Year, to Conference,

"THAT it is highly neceſſary that a proper Conſtitution ſhould be formed, and an executive Government "eſtabliſhed, the Particulars of which to be ſettled by the Conference and the Delegates of the Truſtees, &c. for the Appro-"bation of the Societies at large." The Tranſactions of this Year not only confirm the Sentiments of that Reſolution, but induce us to annex a few Outlines for the Conſideration of Conference:

1ſt. That an Intercourſe by Delegates, or *a public Letter*, ſubſiſt between the Circuits, Diſtricts, and Conference.

2d. That all our Rules of Diſcipline be ſo expreſſed, that no Individual, or ſmall Number of Individuals, may be the ſole judges of the Meaning of Rules, which affect the whole Body—or entruſted with a Power to act in Oppoſition to whole Societies and Circuits without Controul.

3d. That all our public Accounts be kept in ſuch a Manner that individual Characters may not eaſily be rendered ſuſpicious.

4th. That the Admiſſion of local and travelling Preachers amongſt us may be manifeſtly attended with the Sanction of Numbers inſtead of Individuals.

WE are decidedly of Opinion that our Rules, on theſe Subjects, as they now ſtand, are not ſufficiently explicit, and that the want of ſomething more explicit has occaſioned ſo much Contention.

WE entreat the Conference, as they regard the Peace of the Societies, to form ſome additional Rules that will render the executive Power more effectual.

WILLING to contribute our Mite to terminate the Diſcords around us—we wait the Reply of CONFERENCE to ſuggeſt any further Particulars on theſe Points.

Signed by Order of the Meeting,
RICHARD SAUSE, CHAIRMAN.
THOMAS DAY, SECRETARY.

In conſequence of the ANSWER to the following NOTE ſent into CONFERENCE, "The Meeting of Truſtee Delegates reſpectfully requeſt the Conference will appoint the Time that will be moſt convenient to receive an ADDRESS from this Meeting."

THE ADDRESS was deliver'd about 10 o'Clock on *Thurſday* Morning, JULY 28, by the CHAIRMAN who ſign'd it, and the SECRETARY, accompanied by all the DELEGATES preſent.

The Papers brought by the Delegates (incloſed in a Cover) were likewiſe preſented at the ſame Time, together with the following NOTE:

"THE TRUSTEES reſpectfully inform the CONFERENCE that they will meet at 3 o'Clock this Afternoon."

A LETTER from *Cork* was receiv'd, ſtating the groſs Behaviour of one of their Preachers, Mr. *Sutcliff*, in breaking the Rules of Pacification with reſpect to the *Sacrament*; this Meeting conceiving the Subject of that Letter to be of very great Importance, ordered that it ſhould be copied by the Secretary, be preſented by the Chairman, and particularly recommended to the Conſideration of the CONFERENCE.

At 3 o'Clock DR. COKE, with Meſſrs. *Mather*, *Bradburn*, *Bradford*, and *Adam Clark*, came into the Meeting and delivered the following NOTE:

DEAR BRETHREN, *London*, 28*th July*, 1796.

"WE are deſired by the CONFERENCE to inform you, that your ADDRESS was read to them, and that it is their Deſire to meet your Wiſhes, and thoſe of the People, to the utmoſt of their Power; and therefore they will take into Conſideration the Particulars therein contained; and as far as in them lies reſtore and preſerve Peace. They aſſure you, that they are deeply affected with the Contentions which now diſturb the Societies.

"WE are alſo ordered to inform you, that the CONFERENCE have receiv'd ſeveral Counter-petitions, one of which the Committee deputed to deliver this Letter, will read to you."

Sign'd in Behalf of the Conference,

T. TAYLOR, PRESIDENT.
T. COKE, SECRETARY.

DR. COKE then read a Letter from *Sheffield* to the CONFERENCE*—and the Letter from *Cork* was deliver'd to the Preachers, who took it into Conference, from whence it was return'd by Mr. *Mather* to this Meeting.

After the Preachers were withdrawn, the following Memorial to Conference was read, debated and agreed to, viz.

"THE TRUSTEES are very conſcious of the Difficulties which attend particularizing the Subjects alluded to in their Addreſs. Many of them are too well acquainted with the Work of a Preacher to wiſh to ſuggeſt any Thing that will weaken their Hands, or render the Preachers leſs capable of executing the Government of the Societies. They ſolemnly declare, whatever the Manner of doing it may be, their great Object is, *To ſtrengthen the executive Government*; *and promote Union through the Body*. Leſt their Deſigns ſhould be miſunderſtood, and thereby their Object fruſtrated, they earneſtly wiſh the Preachers to credit the Purity of their Intentions. If that is believed, any Difference of Sentiments on the enſuing Subjects will not leſſen the general Diſpoſition to Peace.

"Waving farther Remarks, they ſubmit the following Particulars reſpecting Diſcipline to a Committee of Preachers with whom they would be glad to converſe, if the Meaſure meets the Approbation of Conference. A few Hours (or ſhort Time) ſpent in Deliberation with a Committee of Preachers would enable the Delegates to lay their final Sentiments before the Conference. They wiſh to obſerve, that they have not the moſt diſtant Idea of interfering with the Conference in ſtationing the Preachers—They declare themſelves firm Friends to the ſimple Rules of the Methodiſt Societies, and have no wiſh to form a ſeparate Party.—They therefore wiſh for the Formation of Rules to the following Purport,

1ſt. "That no Perſon be recommended to travel without the Sanction of the Leaders of the Society where he has lived, and the Quarterly Meetings.

2d. "That no Preachers admit or exclude Members, Stewards, Leaders, or Local Preachers, in Oppoſition to the Judgment of a Leader's and Quarterly Meeting.

3d. "That no Perſon be admitted into full Connexion to travel till he has the Approbation of the two laſt Quarterly Meetings in the Circuit he labours, before the Conference.

4th. "That all Buſineſs (except ſtationing Preachers) neceſſary to be tranſacted between the Circuits, Diſtricts, and Conference, be done in a public general Letter, the Outlines of which to be drawn up by a Committee of Conference.

5th. "That this be tranſmitted to the Diſtricts and Conference, either by the Preacher or a Delegate, which ever is determined by a Quarterly Meeting.

6th. "That Delegates meet with the Preachers in the Diſtrict Meetings and Conference.

7th. "That all Collections and public Monies be entered into the Society Books where they are made, and when they become Circuit Collections, be transferred to the Circuit Books;—and that minute Details of all public Monies be communicated to the Societies.

8th. "That the Letters from *Briſtol*, *Mancheſter*, *Bolton*, and *Cork*, reſpecting the SACRAMENT, be made a Part of the Buſineſs in the Meeting with the Delegation of Preachers."

* It may be neceſſary to remark, that the Letters brought by the Delegates to this Meeting, differed as much, in reſpect of their particular Views and Subjects, from one another, as this Letter did from any of them. Nevertheleſs they were all ſent into Conference by this Meeting; not becauſe the Meeting ſanctioned their Contents (which it certainly could not) but becauſe they were ſent to it for that Purpoſe; and tended ſtrongly to evince the Exiſtence of Diſcord, and the neceſſity of adopting ſome *general* Mode of putting a ſtop to it throughout the Societies. It is likewiſe worthy of remark, that all the Reſolutions adopted by this Meeting, however the Delegates may differ in Judgment on other Subjects, have paſſed unanimouſly.

The CONFERENCE being broke up for the Day before the Memorial could be fully prepared, it was tranſmitted to Mr. Pawſon by the Chairman, together with the following Note,

"THE Preachers who met the Truſtees Delegates, requiring more minute Information of their Sentiments on the Subjects implied in our Addreſs, we reſpectfully ſubmit the incloſed to Conference. Should the Conference permit a Delegation of the Preachers to meet the Truſtees, we ſhall be glad as ſoon as convenient to know the Hour that will ſuit."

FRIDAY MORNING the CONFERENCE appointed the requeſted Meeting to be at 4 o'Clock in the Afternoon—at which Time Mr. *Taylor* the PRESIDENT, accompanied by Meſſrs. *Mather*, *Pawſon*, *Thompſon*, *Clark*, *Benſon*, *Murlin*, *Rodda*, *Bradburn*, *Moore*, *Bradford*—attended; and the Meeting was adjourned into the Morning Chapel.

From this Converſation the following Particulars are adduced by this Meeting, viz.

1ſt. That the general Anſwer of Conference is contained in their Letter to this Meeting.

2d. With reſpect to the Letters from *Briſtol*, *Cork*, *&c.* on the Subject of the Sacrament, they declared "That they were attached to the Articles of Pacification, and were determined to abide by them; and were even leſs inclined "to admit the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments than they formerly had been."

3d. They ſaid, "Rules were already formed, which were printed in the large Minutes of the Conference, "and other Publications, which were fully adequate to remedy all the Evils complained of; but as it ſeemed theſe Rules "were either not underſtood, or not known, they would reviſe, explain, and if neceſſary amend them, ſo as to meet if they "can the Wiſhes of the Complainants."

Monday, Auguſt 1ſt, 1796, The Minutes from the Beginning were read, and ordered to be printed.

Reſolv'd, THAT a Subſcription be opened to defray the preſent Expences; that a like Subſcription be made at every future Meeting; and that the Delegates be reimburſed their Expences by their Conſtituents.

Reſolv'd likewiſe, THAT this CONFERENCE be adjourned to the laſt *Monday* in JULY, 1797, to be held at *Leeds*;—and we earneſtly recommend that a Meeting of Delegates from the Truſtees, Leaders, Stewards, and Local Preachers of every Circuit in *Great Britain* and *Ireland* may then take place.——And, as all the Proceedings of this Meeting at *London* have been founded on the RESOLUTIONS of the Meeting at *Mancheſter*, in the laſt Year, it is requeſted that all Letters relative to the Subjects of Diſcuſſion therein noticed, be ſent to the CHAIRMEN of the ſeveral COMMITTEES, "formed for the Purpoſe of preſerving and perpetuating *Primitive Methodiſm*, in Connexion with the eſtabliſhed Church, "and to ſee that our RULES and AGREEMENTS are faithfully kept both by Preachers and People,"——*Viz.*

MR. JOHN HORTON——*for LONDON.*
MR. HENRY DURBIN——*BRISTOL.*
MR. JOHN STONEHOUSE—*MANCHESTER.*
MR. WILLIAM HARDON—*LEEDS.*
MR. ARTHUR KEENE——*DUBLIN.*

Sign'd on Behalf of the MEETING,

JOHN COLLINSON, PRESIDENT.
THOMAS DAY, SECRETARY.

Methodists
in 1795.

METHODIST ARCHIVES
LAMPLOUGH COLLECTION
651 AND
RESEARCH CENTRE